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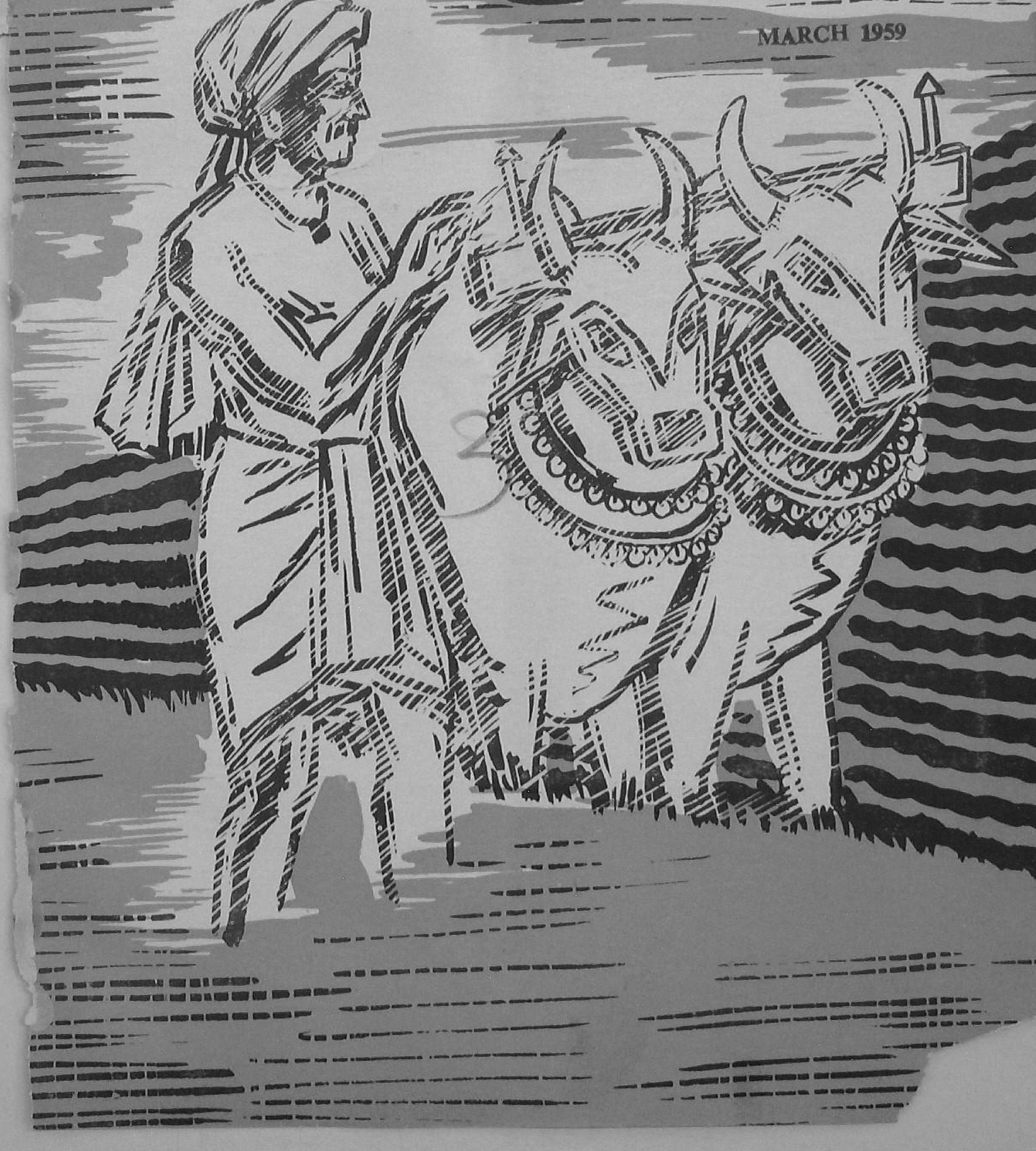
Gram Sevak

MARCH 1959



ALL ABOUT FERTILIZERS

What Villagers Say

W. B. RAHUDKAR

Lecturer in Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, Nagpur.

ONE OF THE major causes of low crop yields in India is inadequate supply of plant nutrients through manures and fertilizers. Judicious use of fertilizers have been considered as one of the quickest means of achieving increased food production. Attempts have been made to step up food production by the use of fertilizers since the launching of Grow More Food Campaign. Fertilizer Demonstration Trials are conducted on cultivators' fields to make cultivators fertilizer-minded and to encourage more use of fertilizers.

The investigation was carried by me in two Community Development Blocks of Vidarbha to know the experiences, opinions and prejudices of the cultivators about the fertilizers. The schedule was prepared and 337 cultivators from these blocks (Balapur and Nagpur) were interviewed. The findings of this investigation are reported below briefly.

FARM YARD MANURE

Only 5.32 per cent cultivators said that they could apply Farm Yard Manure to their fields in sufficient quantities while about 90 per cent cultivators were of the opinion that they could not get sufficient quantity of Farm Yard Manure for supplementing the fertilizers.

About 73 per cent of the cultivators who adopted the use of fertilizer were literate, as against the percentage of literacy of 13.27 in Nagpur block and 31.88 in Balapur block. Most of the cultivators who used the fertilizer were of the age of 26 to 45 years. The percentage of cultivators using the fertilizer tends to increase with the bigger size of land holdings. Most of the cultivators who used fertilizer were owner—cultivators. It was observed that the cultivators who were members of the Gram-Panchayat, Village Leaders and Village Officials, and even the lowest Village official Kotwal, used more fertilizer. Cultivators having subsidiary occupation were also found more likely to adopt the use of fertilizer. Because they are often economically in a better position compared to other cultivators of the village.

Seventy nine per cent cultivators felt that the cost of the fertilizer was high in relation to the extra profit they expected to derive from its use. But it is surprising to note that about 75% of the cultivators were still willing to purchase the fertilizer.

APPLICATION

The farmers of Vidarbha follow two methods of application of fertilizer to the crops *viz.*, broadcasting and drilling. Out of these, the drilling method (placement of fertilizer) was preferred by most of the cultivators. Sixty per cent of the cultivators applied the fertilizer to the crop as top-dressing, 22 per cent applied it at the time of sowing and 10 per cent applied it before sowing. Cash

(*Continued on cover page* 3)

27/40

मज़दूर मंज़िल
ग्राम सेवक

GRAM SEVAK

Magha-Phalguna 1880

Vol. 5 March 1959 No. 8

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Editor: D. Raghavan

Asstt. Editor: M. K. Rao

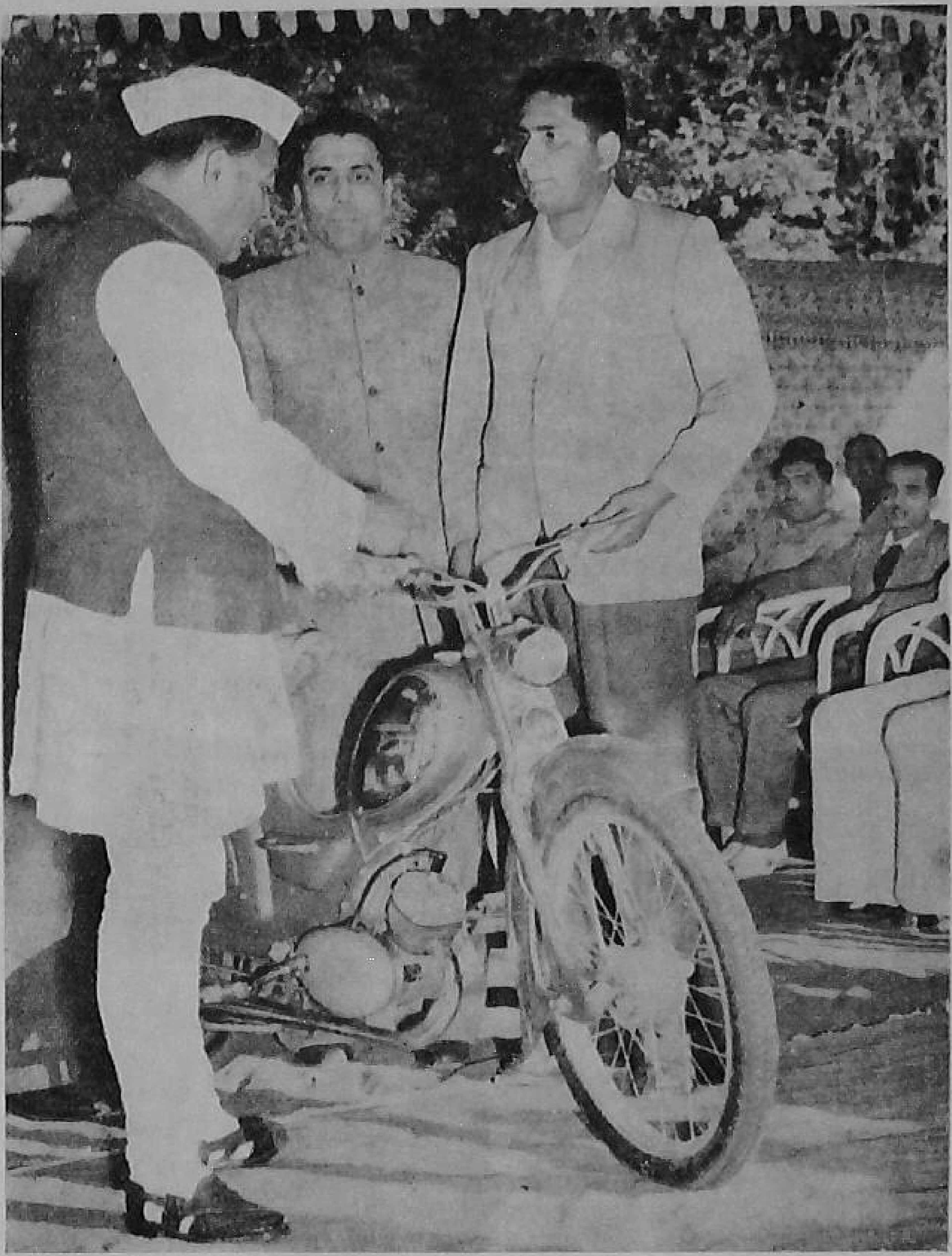
Cover Design: Romesh Chandra

BUSINESS NOTICE

Single Copy : 15 nP.

Annual : Rs. 1.25

All enquiries regarding agency and rates of subscription and advertisements may be addressed to the Publications Division, Old Secretariat, Delhi-8. Editorial correspondance may be addressed to the Editor, *Gram Sevak*, Ministry of Community Development, New Delhi.

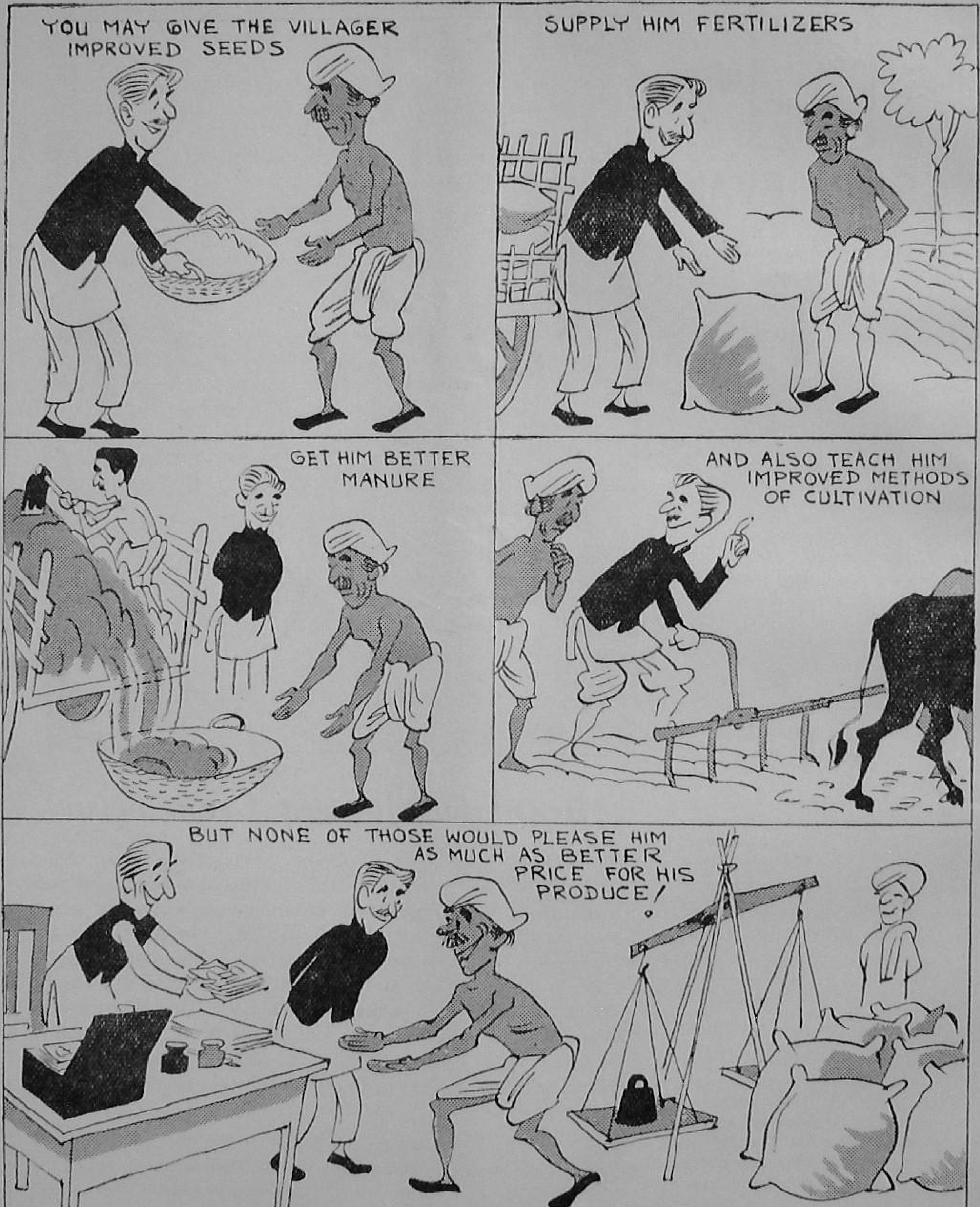


Award for the best Gram Sevak

Shri H. N. Mazumdar, a Gram Sevak of the Resubelpara Development Block in Garo Hills district (Assam) who was adjudged the best Gram Sevak in the country received a motor cycle as the award from Shri S. K. Dey, Union Minister for Community Development and Cooperation. The motor cycle is a gift from the Prime Minister, who had received it when he visited the Federal Republic of Germany. The Minister also awarded consolation prizes to four Gram Sevaks from Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Bihar. Two consolation prizes are to be awarded to Gram Sevaks from Himachal Pradesh and Manipur.

The selection of the best Gram Sevak at the national level was done by a committee which included the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, Prof. N. R. Malkani, M.P., and the Ministry's Secretary and Adviser on agriculture.

PRICE—WORTHY



LETTERS

Paper Awards

Sir,

I read with interest that one Shri Harinarayan Mazumdar working as a Gram Sevak in the Garo Hills had been adjudged the best out of over 30,000 such personnel working all over the country. But I wonder if the best form of encouraging talent among Gram Sevaks is to choose 'the best among them' by an obviously arbitrary method. Without in any way detracting the merit of Shri Mazumdar I may say that Garo Hills in Assam must by all accounts be the least representative of a typical block area. Besides it is also not quite fair to judge the work of a Gram Sevak purely on the basis of physical achievements, which have sometimes been found only on paper. In all humility may I submit that the better way of encouraging talents and offering incentives to the ground level workers would be to make them eligible for promotion in their respective executive and administrative cadres. I have myself talked to some of the Gram Sevaks who have been selected as among the best suitable for awards and they entirely agree with what I have said above.

New Delhi, Yours etc.,
11-2-59. *Emkay Roy*

Public Recognition

Sir,

A craze for competitions of various kinds has seized the community development programme. There is a competition for the best compost pits, for rearing better kinds of pedigree birds, for higher yields in the fields and lastly for the best Gram Sevak at the national level. No doubt cultivators are the persons who deliver the goods, but what about the improved agricultural implements which help them a lot in the process. Such implements are both time and labour-saving. All those who are engaged in the manufacture of improved implements—right from the village artisans to engineers and designers and above all those who help in their mass production, popularisation and distribution deserve public recognition.

Ferozabad, Yours etc.,
23-2-59. *S. N. Sahani*

First Fruits

Sir,

Townfolks, now-a-days, have got a feeling that the Government is showing us, the poor villagers, too much favour. As an explanation they cite the Community Development programme, and say that huge sums are being spent for us, whereas they are being neglected. They are no doubt jealous of us. We do not want to stand in their way of getting some benefit or the other from the Government. But this much we can say that our needs are so many, and our conditions so wretched that the present programme is hardly able to meet all our requirements. We are not a bunch of ungrateful persons. We admit that the Community Development programme is trying to improve our lot, and we are grateful for it. We want water for the crops unlike the townspeople who require them for household purposes. We want electricity not to light our homes but to operate pumps to lift water to the fields. We want not big hospitals, with a big staff and large stock of medicines, but primary health centres with the minimum staff, and some essential medicines to serve a number of our adjacent villages. These are but only a few of our most elementary needs. The Community Development programme is yet to meet all of our elementary needs. It has not yet been able to make us self-reliant, but has prepared us for finding fault where it exists. In other words it has aroused a democratic urge in us, made us bold enough to speak out our minds and demand a better deal.

Shivapuri, Yours etc.,
20-1-1959 *V. Ramnathan,*

SPECIAL AREAS

The Union Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation have sent detailed suggestions to the State Governments for drawing up individual programmes for areas deserving special treatment and emphasis. Special problems in different types of areas, e.g., (1) *desert and dry areas,* (2) *coastal areas,* (3) *hilly areas,* (4) *tribal areas, and* (5) *areas around cities and big towns, deserve special consideration. The Ministry have, therefore, suggested to the State Governments different contents of the programme in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation, industries, health, social education and women and children's programme, to enable them to chalk out a special programme suited to the need of these areas.*

LAND CO-OPERATIVES

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WE HAVE MADE a good deal of progress all over India. People forget sometimes what tremendous progress has been made in India during the past 11 years and more. We want to make greater progress. We want to advance faster, not only in agriculture, but in industry. Therefore, we have to pay greater attention to increasing agricultural production and more particularly the yield per acre. Our yield per acre is one of the poorest in the world. In other places, the yield is sometimes four times as much. We in India could easily double our yield of food production and other crops provided we organised ourselves and provided we all work hard in the right way.

One of the first things we did after attaining independence was to get rid of the system of zamindars, Jagirdars, etc. as it was out of date. That system had to go and it has gone. Even good systems become out of date in different times. It was not a question of our having any ill-will towards the Zamindars or Jagirdars. Even new many things remained to be done in the direction of land reform and I have no doubt they will be done.

SMALL HOLDINGS

In India, we have only small holdings and so we have to think of both social justice and economic advance leading to much greater productivity. We have the example of many countries in the world. I do not refer to the Communist countries, because their thinking is based on different foundations. I would not even refer to non-Communist countries where they have land reforms by having recourse to ceilings. I would cite the instance of Japan, which has a very prosperous agriculture. The Japanese work hard and they are a disciplined people. In the land reforms that the Japanese had adopted, there was the provision of ceilings on land. They did this on the recommendation of the United States of America.

CO-OPERATIVES

We in India have small holdings all over and the farmers have not necessary resources to adopt scientific techniques. The idea behind the co-operative farming is that small farmers in a village, who know each other well, could co-operate in a common task, thereby having larger resources at their disposal and thereby being able to introduce better and more improved techniques. A small agriculturist by himself can not do much and, therefore, they are drawn inevitably to co-operation. Co-operation can be of many kinds. In the first instance, let there be service co-operatives. While retaining ownership of the land, we could co-operate in respect of getting good seeds, fertilizers and small machines. Co-operation is not merely economic, but it is a way of life.

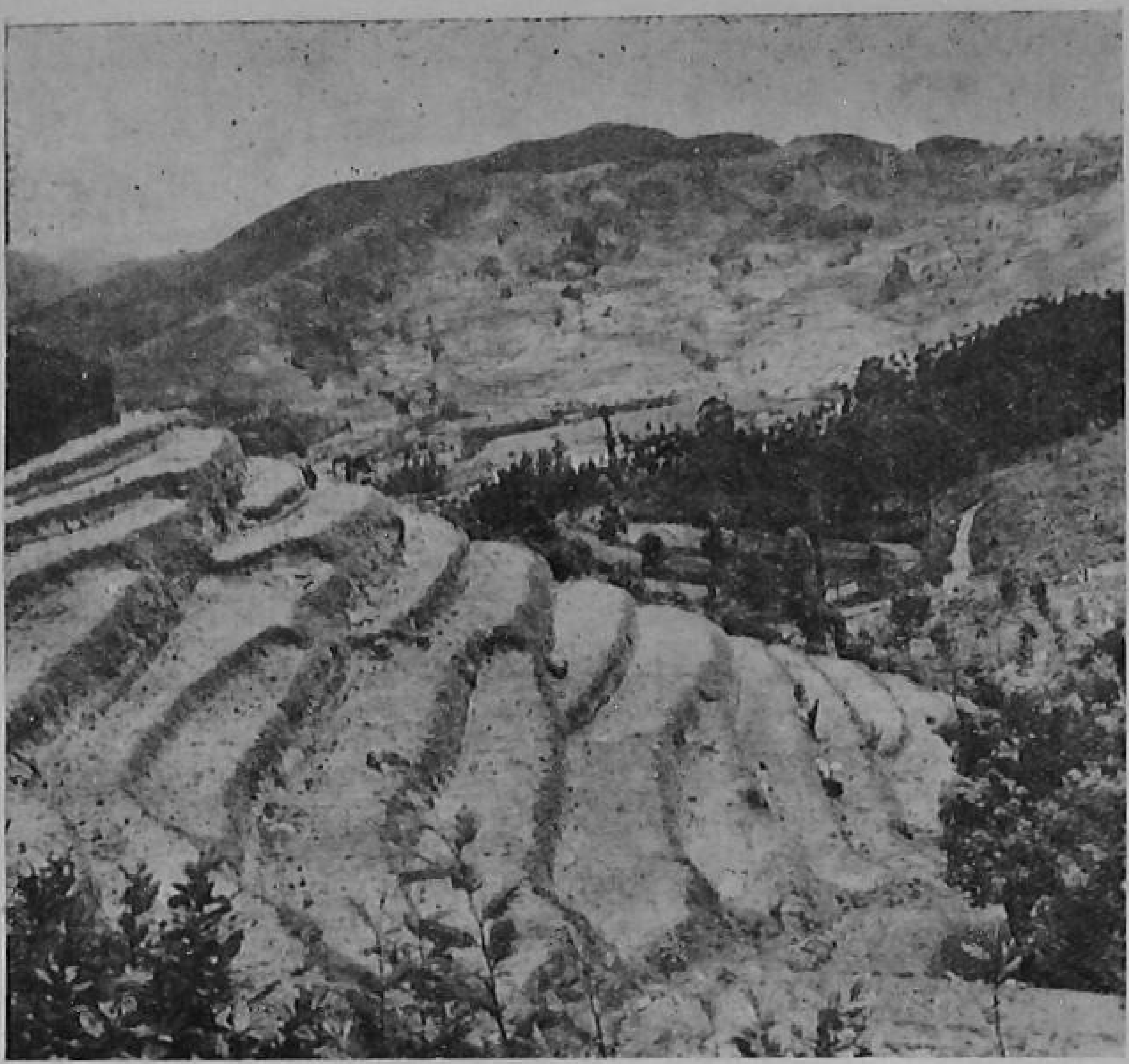
The ultimate objective is that each farmer should be self-reliant and stand on his own feet. In India, it is a habit that we always look to the Government for this thing or that. Government must and officials must serve the people, I agree. But it is good to remember that India will never progress unless people helped themselves.

SELF-HELP

We are determined to go ahead with production in land, we are determined to make agriculture a success, we are determined to raise the level of living of hundreds and millions of farmers and peasants in India. In the ultimate analysis, it is the village in India that will be the test of our progress. We must raise the

(*continued on page* 8)

A typical paddy growing area in Kazhakuttam Block, Kerala



A panoramic view of the area in the Nilgiri Hills where intensive soil conservation work has been recently completed. Terrace building such as we see in this photograph constitutes the most effective way of checking soil erosion by water in hilly areas.

The Bangalore Method

B. S. SOMESWARAIAH

Gram Sevak, Kudiyanur, P.O. Malar—Kolar, Mysore State.

OUR FARMERS are not growing enough because they are not preparing manures as they ought to do. With regard to the preparation of manure they are most conservative and they follow the traditional method of simply heaping up manures in the open exposed to Sun and rains. The manurial contents as a result are lost. The only solution is compost making.

This method is termed after Bangalore because it was evolved at Bangalore during the last world war. The method is very simple and any ryot can follow it. It consists of filling up of usual farm yard manure in rectangular pits of 20′ x 3′ x 4′ size. This filling up of pits has to follow a certain procedure known as sectional filling. If compost pits are dug by farmers, their housewives can easily fill the pit by the sectional filling process.

Every body and almost every farmer knows about compost making yet farmers very rarely follow this method.

Why is it so? Many reasons can be ascribed to this conservatism on the part of the Indian farmer. In the first place they are reluctant to change their ago old traditional practices—piling farm yard manures in heaps or filling them in pits of various dimensions. Either pits will be very wide or deep. The rubbish will never be covered by earth. Gram manure will not be available to ryots. Many ryots do not have the space to keep their own manure. They are to be under the obligation of others to put their manure heaps. They will never be allowed to dig compost pits in others land. Very few people are having lands nearer to the village. These people are having age old manure pits in their plots and however much the extention workers many persuade them they will never come round. Usually the villagers are not having separate compost yards. So people are left to their own lot. Some farmers who want to prepare manure in the scientific manner will be having their lands at a distance. To such people compost making remains an impossibility.

Even if a compost pit is dug by a farmer either out of persuasion or at his own will, it will never be maintained for long. Whenever the pit is filled up, it is left to rot for a certain period of time. While doing so the sides and the bottom of the pit will become black by absorbing the manurial contents. Farmers while emptying the pit, will scrape this block earth to a depth of 2-3 ft. and hence the pit will become irregular and afterwards will assume all sorts

(*Continued on page 7*)

PADDY CULTIVATION

(Contributed by Kora Gramodyog Kendra, Bombay)

In India to-day there are about 7,90,00,000 acres of land under paddy cultivation, producing on an average 800 lbs. of paddy and using about 80 lbs. of seeds per acre.

Paddy cultivation in and around Kora Kendra, Borivili Bombay where the land is of inferior quality, yields an average production of about 750 to 800 lbs. of paddy per acre. In summer, the land used to crack to about 6 in. in width and 18 in. to 24 in. depth. Rainfall is about 80 in. We were using cowdung manure and preparing seedlings by rabing.

The typhoon in 1948 brought down the standing crop to the ground which made the workers of Kora Kendra think. Methods known from meagre information got from Japan which were experimented in 1949 showed encouraging results. The Bombay Government delegation to Japan in 1951 for village industries gave us a chance to study on the spot the actual method of paddy cultivation by hiring a field in Japan. We could notice that the simple elementary principles which were very important, were not properly followed in India and by adopting these simple principles it was shown that we could increase our yield considerably. Our production of paddy (per acre) is the lowest in the world and much below the minimum. Looking to the conditions in India, *viz.*, soil, seeds, rain, weather etc., it should be possible for us to produce 1,600 lbs. of paddy per acre at the lowest. During our tour in India to propagate the Japanese method of paddy cultivation on behalf of the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi in 1953, we noticed that most of the important elementary processes were already existing in India in one part or another, but not altogether in one place.

The first important item is the reduction in seeds. At present we are using about 80 lbs. seeds per acre but the lowest is about 1½ lbs. in Navagam (Ahmedabad) and highest 300 lbs. in *Chilkli* (Surat) per acre. We consider that 5 lbs. per acre is quite sufficient. Even if we take at 10 lbs. per acre, it means a saving of 70 lbs. of seeds per acre. Calculating the value of the seeds at Rs. 10 per maund (although the price is between Rs. 15-17) India would be able to save not less than Rs. 75 crores per year or about 25 lakhs tons of seeds. It may be mentioned here that reduction in quantity of seeds helps to get healthy seedlings and it helps to increase the production automatically, as the manure, air and space available to each seedling to grow is more than what each seedling would get when large number of seedlings are planted closely. Fewer seedlings allow easy weeding and inter-culturing getting more tillers and larger yields.

If the seeds are put in a saline mixture, the solid healthy seeds will sink to the bottom and those which are not likely to germinate will float on the top. This method will assure at least 95% seeds of germinating. One of the reasons for our using larger quantity of seeds is that germination percentage is low.

Transplanting lesser number of seedlings, reduces the number of workers required to work in the field, both for uprooting and transplanting. The Kora Kendra used to engage 30 workers per acre in 1948-49. This number has been reduced to 8 to-day. The actual number of persons required should be about 4 per acre which will result in considerable reduction of expenditure on labour also.

Transplanting in straight lines makes it easier for interculturing and weeding. Applying of manure in three doses while interculturing loosens the soil and encourages more tillering. The highest number of tillers that Kora had was 235 from one seedling, but the average is between 30 to 40, giving larger production.

The raised bed method makes the seedlings transplantable within 16 to 17 days instead of 25 to 35 days. The time thus available from the crop in the field enables longer earheads to come out with more grains.

Kora Kendra was using ordinary cowdung manure during 1948-50, producing about 10 mds., paddy per acre. Later on, in 1950-51, we started using fertilisers like superphosphate and manure mixtures. In 1954 we completely stopped using fertilisers and switched on to organic manure, using flesh manure, digested bone meal, gas plant manure, night soil manure, green leaves, etc., produced locally. The production reached 40 mds. per acre on an average, the maximum yield being 65 mds. per acre.

We have reduced the quantity of seeds from 80 lbs. to 5 lbs., workers from 30 to 8 per acre. The total expenditure of Rs. 350 per acre has been brought down to Rs. 250. Paddy production which has increased from 10 mds. to 40 mds. per acre has brought down the cost from Rs. 35 per md. in 1948 to Rs. 6 per md. in 1958. All this is possible by adopting sincerely the above methods now known as the Japanese method of paddy cultivation. Pedal driven thrashing machine used in the fields will save shedding on the road which is more than 5 per cent.

Our Prime Minister spoke to Krishi Pandits in Delhi in 1953 as follows :—"I was simply wonderstruck with the green garden which the gentleman (Shree Pranlal Kapadia) showed me. The method involved was the use of simple implements, not big machines and equally lesser quantity of seeds. All that was called for was some judicious work. Reduction of 80% in seeds means savings in crores as also three fold increase in produce. All this was actually experimented in Bombay, Kora Kendra. Why do we not publicise this method if only half or even quarter of it were true? If the claim stood justified to the extent of only 25%, the food map of the country would change; our entire plan would undergo a radical transformation".

The claim has been more than justified in hundreds of places all over India where Gandhi Smarak Nidhi workers and others have worked sincerely. Gandhi Smark Nidhi should take up this programme once again all over India. We should also take the help of Bharat Sevak Samaj and such other constructive work bodies and the Community Project Administration. This will only succeed if the sincere workers will discuss this matter in a heart to heart talk with the farmers, instead of issuing official orders and questionnaires.

THE BANGALORE METHOD

(Continued from page 5)

of shapes. Thus all the attempts the Gram Sevaks will be futile. No amount of training and publicity can solve this problem unless certain amenities are provided by the government to the farmers. Every village must have a reserve of 2-3 acres of land for farming a "Compost Yard". Government should pass a legislation to this effect. The village panchayat must and should get the pits dug and the pits must be lined with rough stones. The village panchayat must allocate at least two pits to every bonafide ryot. For the present it is very difficult for the village panchayat to find the where-withal. Additional taxation by the village panchayat is out of question. So either the State Government or the Union Government must allot certain amount of money out of the land revenue for this purpose. Then there must be intensive propaganda by the extension workers. The Gram Sevaks must pay weekly visits to every family which owns a compost pit and induce them to take up scientific method of making compost. The jurisdiction of the Gram Sevaks must be reduced to half. At present, the number of villages in his beat ranges from 10 to 30. The Gram Sevaks must be equipped with flib books, flash cards, posters and literature about compost. In fact all possible visual aids must be supplied to Gram Sevaks. Without such a step taken by the government it is not possible to solve this problem of compost making and there by solving the food problem of the country.

TRAINING OF GRAM SEVIKAS

It is estimated that about 7,800 Gram Sevikas will be needed for welfare work in the Central Social Welfare Board's rural projects during the Second Plan period. Out of these, 3,000 have been already trained and provision has been made for training 2,600 more. These workers are employed or will be employed in 450 Projects of the original pattern and 1,120 Projects in Community Development Blocks which are expected to be functioning by the end of the Second Plan.

Three more institutions, apart from the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, which has been training Gram Sevikas for the last four years, have been selected to impart training. A few more are likely to be chosen next year.

The Central Social Welfare Board has decided to arrange a short course of training for the more suitable among the untrained Gram Sevikas already working in the Projects. These have already acquired experience, and through further training, will become better qualified to handle their job.

It has also been decided to give grants for condensed courses of training for women of suitable age groups from rural areas to acquire the minimum educational qualification required for Gram Sevika training. This scheme has been drawn up and is being implemented because of complaints about the inadequacy of trained Gram Sevikas who, for various reasons, mostly because of age and their city background, have proved unsuitable for handling their jobs. In order that only the best candidates are recruited, they are required to pass a simple test in reading, writing, arithmetic and general knowledge and to appear for an interview before a subcommitttee of the State Board on which a representative of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund also sits. Within a fortnight of joining the training centres those candidates who are found unable to cope with the course are weeded out and are replaced by others on the waiting list. At the time of selection a few more candidates than the quota for the training centre are, therefore, selected and a waiting list prepared, so that at short notice any vacancy at the training centre caused by the discharge of a candidate on grounds of her inaptitude or otherwise is filled immediately. Those candidates who fail to qualify as Gram Sevikas may, if found fit, be trained and employed as dais in some of the project centres.

Each Gram Sevika, selected for training, is expected to execute a bond that she will complete her training and will work as a Gram Sevika for a certain period of time. In case she does not complete her training for any reason other than medical, she has to refund the amount of money that has been given to her during the period.

LAND CO-OPERATIVES

(Continued from Page 4)

village and the villagers. We must give him opportunities of rising. There are many things to be done. The community development movement is a tremendous and revolutionary approach to the problem of rural India. I do not claim that wherever the community development movement has spread, it has been a success. In some cases, it is doing very well, in some cases well and in some cases not well. But the movement is essentially a revolutionary one which will change the whole structure of our countryside.

OUR TASK

Our biggest task today is greater food production. It has been a most painful thing to all of us to have to import foodgrains from other countries. It is really like pouring India's blood outside. Therefore, we must stop this drain. All the farmers and peasants must produce more. This is of urgent importance. Fortunately, we have turned the corner. We expect a bumper crop and the indications for the next harvest are good and we hope to build up huge reserves in the course of this year. But these reserves will not carry us far. It should only be through production and yet more production that we can be self-sufficient and the farmers and peasants who produce more will be doing a real service to the country.

(Extracts from a speech delivered by the Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, at Bangalore on February 4, 1959).

SMALL INDUSTRIES

P. M. MATHAI

THE INDUSTRY programme in the community development blocks can be broadly divided into the following two categories :—

(*A*) Programme with funds available under the budget of blocks.

(*B*) Programme with funds available from the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and the five All India Boards sanctioned through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

(A) **Programme with funds available under the budget of blocks :**

(*i*) *Training of rural artisans* : The object of the programme of training of rural artisans is normally to improve the existing skill. The industries which have been found successful in blocks are blacksmithy, carpentry, tanning, handloom, village oil industry, village pottery, tailoring, brick making etc. The training-*cum*-production centres which were originally started, are being reorganised into pure training centres. Production is undertaken by industrial co-operative societies or by Government to start with, before a co-operative society is formed.

(*ii*) *Industrial Co-operatives*: The acceleration of development of industrial co-operative societies in the block areas has been emphasised. From the block funds subsidy is given to industrial co-operatives for providing technical and managerial help.

(*iii*) *Improved hand tools*: A scheme was prepared in collaboration with the Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, Ministry of Commerce and Industry for introduction of improved hand tools for improving the technical efficiency and productivity of village artisans. These improved hand tools are supplied to village artisans on a subsidised basis.

(*iv*) *Budget* : According to the budget pattern in existence till 31st March, 1958, there was no financial allocation for cottage industries in the N.E.S. budget but a provision of Rs. 50,000 for a period of three years was available in the Community development block budget.

According to the revised budget pattern from April 1958, a sum of Rs. 65,000 is provided for a stage I Block for 5 years and Rs. 50,000 for a Stage II Block for 5 years. Under C. D. budget there is no provision to give loans to industries. Out of the grant allocations of Rs. 65,000 during the first stage and Rs. 50,000 during the second stage, Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 7,500 respectively have been earmarked for promotion of industries under the "Women's Programme."

(B) Programme with funds available from the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and the five All India Boards sanctioned through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

(*i*) Khadi and Village Industries Commission had earmarked Rs. 82 lakhs during 1957-58 and Rs. one crore during 1958-59 for starting village industries in blocks.

(*ii*) *Pilot Projects (Industries)* : The scheme for pilot projects for cottage and small scale industries was actually taken up for implementation from the 1st April, 1956.

(a) Programme: Industrial Potential Survey of each pilot project has been conducted during this year to draw up comprehensive plans of development of cottage and small scale industries. The industrial potential survey reports have been sent to State Governments for implementation of the various recommendations. Finances required for the purpose will be provided by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

(*b*) In the meanwhile *ad hoc* programme sanctioned by Khadi Commission and the other Boards has been under implementation. The progress of these projects as on 30-6-58 is given below :—

(*i*) *Expenditure*: The total expenditure as on 30th June, 1958 is Rs. 1.595 crores.

(*ii*) *Physical achievements*: 34,885 persons have been provided with full employment and 70,645 with part time employment. The total value of production amounted to Rs. 2.51 crores against which the value of sales effected stood at Rs. 2.52 crores.

(*iii*) *Industrial Co-operatives*: 973 industrial co-operatives have been organised with a total membership of 37,168 persons. The Pilot Projects were originally sanctioned for a period of three years. The Planning Commission and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry have now agreed to extend the life of the pilot projects up to the end of March, 1961.

(*iv*) *Industrial Estates*: Nine small industrial estates in pilot project areas and 20 rural industrial estates for community development blocks in the country have been sanctioned.

Extension Officers (Industries): 1,138 Extension Officers (Industries) have been trained by the Small Industries Service Institutes and the Khadi Commission and 482 are under training. Some States have no provision to pay 50% of salaries of Extension Officers (Industries), which is their share. Hence there has been some difficulty in appointing Extension Officers (Industries) for all 2,500 blocks.

State Industries Department:

(a) Statutory Khadi and Village Industries Board: Except in three States, statutory Khadi Boards have been established; but all States have decided to set up Statutory Boards. The State Boards in Bombay, Mysore and Madhya Pradesh have not yet got jurisdiction over the entire State on account of the legal difficulties arising out of the States' reorganisation. State Governments are bringing necessary legislation to constitute a single statutory Board for each of these States. The State Boards are now vested with the responsibility of implementing the khadi and village industries programme in community development blocks.

(b) Director of Industries: By and large, programmes for village and small scale industries other than khadi and village industries are implemented in the blocks through the Director of Industries of the State. The State Industries Departments have been steadily strengthened but many of the officers are new and have to gain experience.

There is a feeling that the answer to the large unemployment is to promote more and more village and small scale industries. But the marketing of the products of village and small scale industries is a problem. In C.D. Blocks very great emphasis is laid on the products of the areas being consumed locally. With the cut in the village and small scale industries provision under the Second Five Year Plan, there is greater difficulty in getting adequate finances for starting industries in the books. The Reserve Bank, the State Bank and the Co-operative Banks are helping only in a very limited way to finance small industries. By and large the banks are shy to finance the village and small scale industries on account of the risk involved. Therefore, the only resources available are from the State Sector, and they are thoroughly inadequate to meet the requirements. However, with the available resources and with the strengthening of the Industries Departments including the State Khadi and Village Industries Boards, the majority of the State Governments have been making steady progress in the field of village and small scale industries in the blocks during the last year.

Eighty-two per cent of villages in Bombay State have been covered by the Co-operative movement.

In Rajasthan only 20 per cent of the villages and 11 per cent of the rural families have been covered by Co-operatives.

An army of over one million Gram Sahayaks, comprising about 11 per cent of the farmers in Uttar Pradesh, will be trained during the Kharif campaign.

PANCHAYATS

A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

PROF. C. R. RATHEE,
Govt. College, Rohtak.

RECENTLY, a section of people have voiced their opinions in favour of nominated Panchayats in place of the elected ones. They quote historical evidence in support of their claim. According to them the members of panchayats of yore were not elected but were chosen by a process of natural selection in the village, by which elderly men who, by their age, character and attainments commanded general respect and influence, formed the executive body for controlling the affairs of the village community. A few years ago, two Tamil inscriptions were discovered in the village of Uttaramallu in South India, which are believed to belong to the Tenth Century A.D. These inscriptions show that during those days there were autonomous village communities governed by elected assemblies of the inhabitants.

Electoral Wards: One of the above plates says that for the purpose of an election, the community was divided into thirty electoral wards. The residents of the various wards would assemble at one place and each one of them would write down on a ballot paper, the name of the candidate he desired to vote for. The polling officer would collect ward-wise all those ballot papers and put them in a big pot. A general meeting of the village presided over by the village priest, would then be convened where the pot would be placed.

The priest would then hold aloft the pot to the full view of the assembly and ask a child, innocent of the contents of the pot, to pick out one of the packets from the pot. The ballot papers of the packet would be given a thorough churning and then transferred to another empty pot. Another child would be called on to the dais to draw one slip out of the latter pot and make it over to the priest. The candidate whose name appeared on the slip so taken out would be declared elected for that ward. The rest of the 30 members, each representing a ward, would be similarly elected.

All and sundry could not expect to get votes. The villagers followed a principle while choosing their nominees. They scrutinized the qualifications of the candidates before casting their votes. The qualifications, broadly were based on property, education, age and practical capacity of the prospective candidates. In case of teachers of good Vedic learning, Smirities or Philosophy, the property qualification was, however, relaxed. Evidently, such persons were above want and could be trusted with the public money.

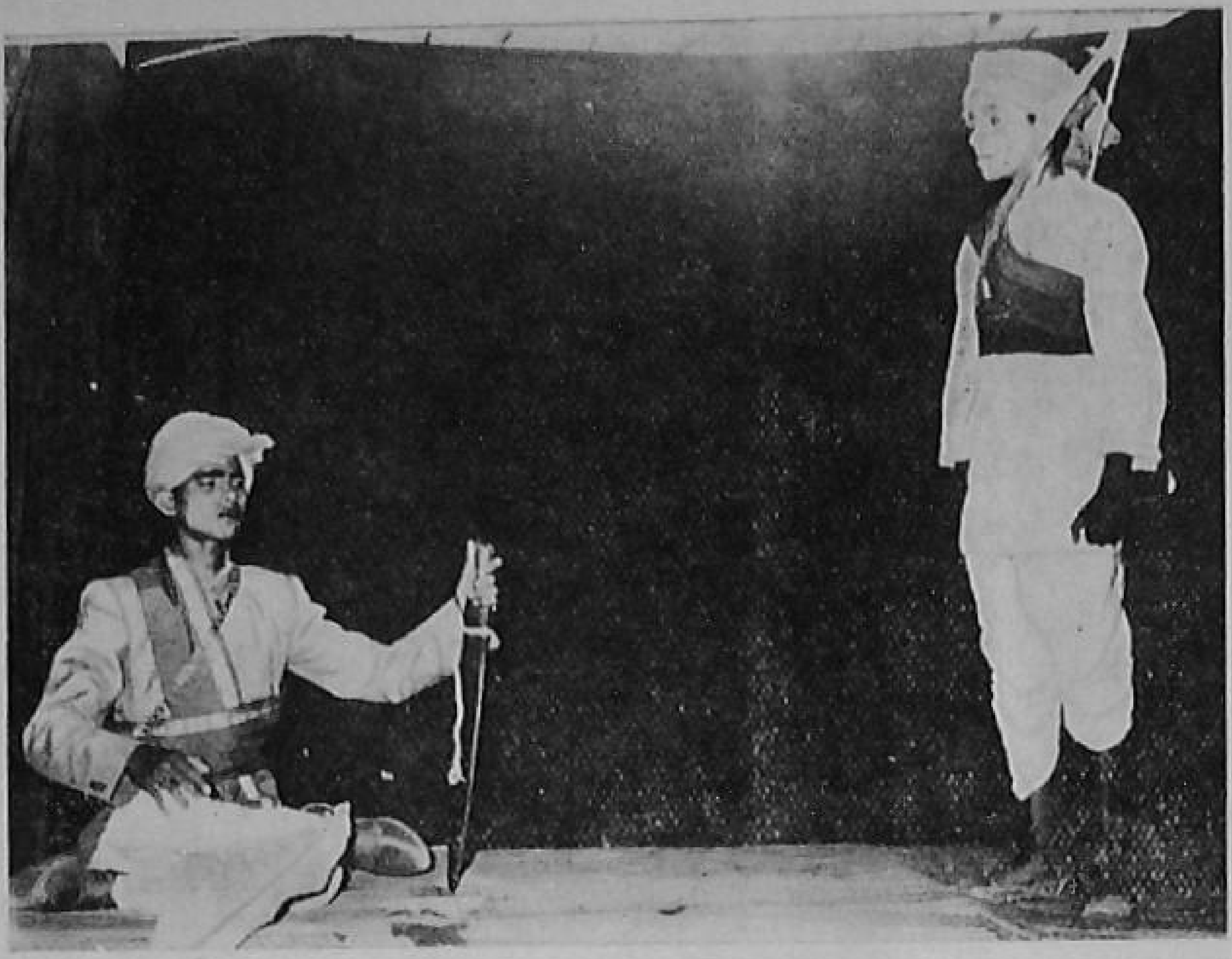
The age qualifications was strictly adhered to. Every candidate was sought to attach along with the nomination paper, a solemn certificate of age from the village priest (Purohit). Previous experience as a member of some committee, of proved virtues and honest discharge of duty was also an important factor which the people used to bear in mind while casting their votes.

Besides, at the time of filing nomination papers, every candidate was to produce a certificate from the village Nyayadhisha (Justice) that the candidate had never been convicted for murder, addiction to intoxicating liquors, theft and adultery. Similar other anti-social activities on the part of the candidate were treated as disqualifications. Conditions of eligibility were thus a sufficient guarantee against the return of a really undesirable person.

The above mentioned inscriptions show that persons who were found guilty of misappropriation of public money, were recalled from the membership of the Gram Sabha (Panchayat) by the constituents. Even the relatives of the guilty citizens were debarred from the right of membership for a period of three years.

Committees:—The persons selected at the general meeting were divided into six committees each concerning one or more public departments like gardens, water, justice, finance, land and general administration. These committees were reconstituted every year. Members held office in an honorary capacity.

Such, in brief, was the system of election and administration in the Indian villages, a thousand years ago.



PROGRAMME PATTERN

THE PANCHAYAT of village Kashti in Shrigonda Taluk in Ahmednagar district has given a lead in village development work. The village recently commissioned a cow-dung gas plant and is now using it for supply of gas for street-lighting. The street gas-lamps were lit for the first time on the last Republic Day. Twenty-five lamp-posts have proudly gone up. Inclusive of pipe and other fittings to carry the gas, the whole project cost only Rs. 10,000. The savings for the Panchayat, it is estimated, will be Rs. 900 annually (the sum spent hitherto on kerosene). The expected life of the plant is twenty years. Kashti has a weekly cattle bazar and the dung collected from this belongs to the Panchayat. It is from this that gas for street lighting is made. Over and above the gass that is burnt in street lamps, the village gets from the plant a quantity of fertilizer that can be put to more efficient use than cow-dung. Long before the gas plant wears out, electricity will have come to Kashti.

COMMUNITY PRIZES

A SCHEME for the award of community prizes at district and State levels as an incentive for increasing agricultural production has been announced.

The scheme of prize-giving will apply for the time being to eight States — Punjab, Rajasthan, U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Bombay, Mysore and Andhra Pradesh, besides the Union territory of Delhi where the 'Rabi' production campaign, now in its closing phases, is in progress. The scheme will be expanded during the forthcoming 'Kharif' season to the other States also. The expenditure involved in the award of the prizes will be borne entirely by the Government of India.

The scheme for the award of community prizes will be in addition to the all-India crop competition scheme which the Government of India revived in September, 1958. The awards will be directly related to the percentage of increase in the total production of food crops.

BEST GRAM SEVAK

SHRI H. N. MAZUMDAR, a Gram Sevak of the Resubelpara Development Block in Garo Hills district (Assam) who was adjudged the best Gram Sevak in the country received a motor cycle as the award. The motor cycle is a gift from the Prime Minister, who has received it when he visited the Federal Republic of Germany. The Minister also awarded consolation prizes to four Gram Sevaks from Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Bihar. Two consolation prizes are to be awarded to Gram Sevaks from Himachal Pradesh and Manipur. The selection of the best Gram Sevak at the national level was done by a committee which included the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, Prof. N. R. Malkani, M. P., the Ministry's Secretary and Adviser on agriculture. The items of work for which the competition was held related to the economic side of the Community Development programme, e.g., agricultural production, animal husbandry, village industries and co-operation.

NEW C.D. BLOCKS

ALLOTMENT OF THE next series of Pre-extension Blocks and conversion of the existing Pre-extension Blocks into Stage I are to be determined by certain

In Punjab, 97 per cent of the people own less than 30 standard acres of land. 52 per cent of farmers have holdings of less than five acres.

* * * *

About 4.94 lakhs acres have been given protection through soil conservation measures during the first two years of the second Plan.

tests of self-reliance and self-help shown by the people of a new area, or of an existing block according to an official press release.

Requisites, for launching the Community Development Programme in any new area, or for continuing an existing Block, include; (1) Fair evidence of cleanliness and sanitation in a village; (2) Number of compost pits dug and used; (3) Extent of coverage by Panchayats and the degree of responsibility for development programme shouldered by them; (4) Extent of coverage by co-operatives and the degree to which credit and supplies are channelised through them; and (5) Any other criterion to be laid down by the State Government having regard to local conditions.

TOTAL COVERAGE

PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS to the community development programme throughout the country in cash, kind and labour is valued at Rs. 61.65 crores up to the end of June 1958. More than half this contribution was made in the 2-1/2 years of the second Five-Year Plan. Total Government expenditure on this programme up to the same date is estimated at Rs. 106.76 crores. There are at present 2,535 community development blocks where work is in progress. The programme will be further extended to cover more people when the Community Development Ministry allocates next April more blocks to the State Governments. Of these blocks, 1,952 belong to the first stage, 431 to the second stage and 152 to the pre-extension stage. These blocks cover a population of about 164 millions, 55.6 per cent of India's total rural population.

STUDY TOUR

A GROUP of 20 farm leaders will be sent to U.S.A. in September this year to make a study of community and farm organisations, cooperatives, extension and rural credit. Arranged under the Indo-American Technical Assistance Programme, the study will extend for a period of three months. The farm leaders will be selected from amongst the progressive agriculturists, leaders of farm organisations and rural co-operatives. Persons eligible to be included in the group are required to send their applications through the State Governments or recognised farmers' organisations to the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture by February 5.

LOK KARYA CENTRE

The Union Minister for Planning asked trainees at the All-India Lok Karya training centre of the Bharat Sevak Samaj in Delhi to create an atmosphere of tolerance, faith and co-operation in the country. The trainees must live a life of dedication and sacrifice for the cause in their hearts. The most important task of the social worker, the Minister said, was to identify local leadership in the villages and help it to energise itself for constructive activity. The centre has been set up by the Bharat Sevak Samaj to train batches of workers who, on the completion of training would go back to the villages and help in executing development programmes. Sixty workers from all parts of the country are receiving training at the centre.

Compost Making

Educating the Co-operators

In SEVERAL countries, compulsory contributions under law, or in terms of the bye-laws of co-operative societies, have to be made to finance educational schemes of members, and in some cases of their families also. Recognising this need, the All India Co-operative Union submitted a scheme to the Government of India for training of members of co-operative societies. This scheme aimed at educating the presidents, secretaries, etc., of co-operative societies in the principles, practices and policies of co-operatives, the laws governing them, the business and accounting procedures to be followed etc., so that they might provide the necessary knowledge and leadership in transforming their societies into popular, effective and efficient units. The scheme also contemplated training of members of managing committees as well as ordinary and potential members of primary societies. In view of the magnitude of the task, and the vast area to be covered, this scheme which was later approved by the Government of India, is now being implemented through the State Co-operative Unions, who in their turn are making full use of the District Co-operative Federation Boards.

BIHAR SCHEME

In pursuance of the scheme, two mobile training units were allotted to Bihar in 1956-57. This number went up to five in 1957-58. In the meanwhile under the Second Five Year Plan the State Government also included a scheme for training of members etc. of Co-operative Societies. This scheme aimed at four peripatetic centres being started, one in each district, in each year of the Plan. The entire State was to be covered by the end of the fourth year. In 1957-58, there were thus eight centres running under this scheme. By the end of March, 1958, all these centres, those being run by the Bihar Co-operative Federation, and the rest by the State Government, had trained 1,153 office bearers, 1,510 *panches*, 18,883 members and potential members of Co-operative Societies. It was felt, however, that this duplication, of two agencies running similar schemes, was unnecessary, and therefore the State Government in consultation with the All India Co-operative Union and the Bihar Co-operative Federation entrusted the administration of their eight centres also to the Co-operative Federation. Thus in the Third Year of the Plan there were thirteen centres in Bihar to cover thirteen out of seventeen districts. Till December, 1958, another 373 office bearers, 1,092 members of managing committees and 6,956 members and potential members of primary societies had been trained in these centres. It can be said that Bihar has thus made rapid strides in the education of members of Co-operative Societies.

In the location of these centres, preference is given to block areas. A centrally situated village is selected for locating the centre and holding of the classes. The members are divided into three categories, namely, (*i*) office bearers, (*ii*) *panches* and members of executive com-

mittees, and (*iii*) members and potential members of primary societies. There are three different types of training courses for each category of members.

i. Office bearers :—Executives of co-operative societies such as presidents, secretaries, treasurers, etc. are brought together under this course which lasts for 36 working days. Each class consists of 20 to 25 trainees, but not more than two office bearers are admitted at a time from each society. The syllabus covers the principle, practices and policies in vogue in co-operative societies, the laws governing them, the business and accounting procedures followed etc. The idea is that those executives should after the training be able to provide the necessary drive, leadership and know-how for transforming their societies into popular and effective units. They should also be able to conduct meetings and control assemblies and be otherwise able to organise the affairs of their societies to the best advantage of the members. Each trainee is given a stipend of Re. 1 per day from the funds provided by the State Government. At the close of the course a test is held in two papers. One concerns the laws and practices including general management and accounts. Those who come out successful are awarded certificates.

ii. Panches and members of the executive committees :—This course lasts for a week and is so designed that besides giving an idea of general principles of co-operatives, those attending the course are made conscious of their obligations and role in ordering the affairs of their societies, firstly as co-operators, and secondly as elected representatives. Importance of holding meetings regularly, powers and functions of meetings of various types, and significance of resolutions passed, follow-up actions to be taken etc., are also explained. Not more than 25 persons are admitted at a time of this course. The instructor has to move from society to society to secure attendance of members at convenient places near their homes.

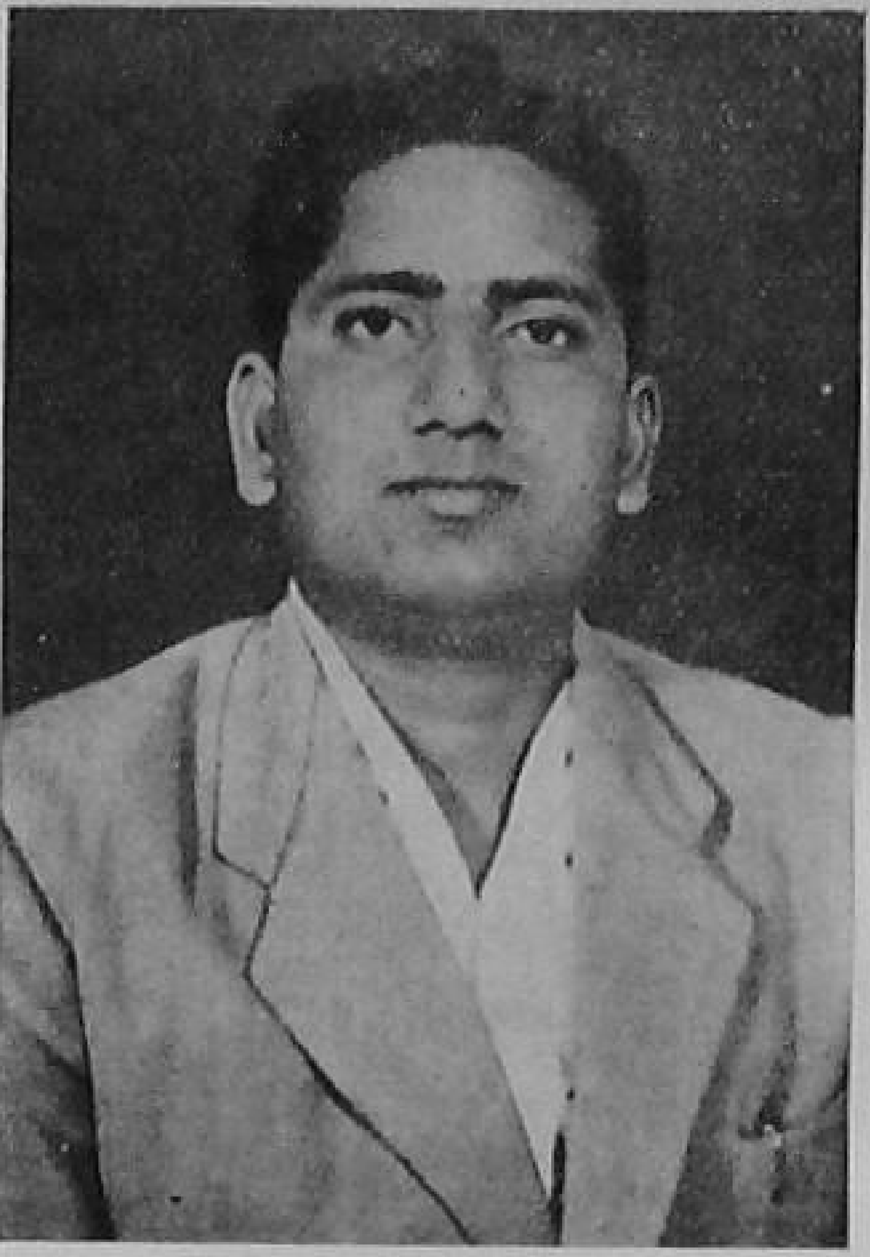
iii. Members and potential members of primary societies :—This is a sort of orientation course in co-operation, lasting for three days. Not more than 35 members are admitted to the course at a time, and the objective is to train the members in the general principles and practices of co-operation, the advantage of joining a society, the importance of the byelaws, the rights and duties of members. In short an attempt is made to explain the significance of democratic set-up in co-operative organisations. The importance of loyalty of members to their organisations, is also one of the subjects covered. To conduct these classes the instructors move from place to place, along with their teaching accessories, such as posters, placards, flannel-graphs, etc. so as to make their lectures interesting and explicit. A few simple books on co-operation in Hindi have also been printed and these are distributed free to those joining the course. The societies are allowed to nominate their executives and members, and potential members for these courses.

The Bihar Co-operative Federation has constituted a special committee at the State level with the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and the General Secretary of the All India Co-operative Union as *ex-officio* members to review and advise it in the execution of the scheme. This committee meets as often as necessary. As a result of the unified control and supervision, a certain amount of uniformity has been secured in the matter of staff, courses of study, as well as the stipends payable to these trainees. The State Government has placed the services of one of its officers to work as Co-operative Development Officer under the Federation. This officer is in executive charge of the scheme.

Co-operatives have been described as "little schools of democracy", and unless the honorary workers and members of co-operative institutions are trained to appreciate and realise the importance of democratic control and the social content of this form of organisation, the main purpose in view will be largely lost. The courses of study mentioned above attempt to explain these to the members. The training does not consist in merely the conduct of a few *ad-hoc* lectures, but it is also designed to explain how different activities should be organised to sustain the interest of members in their co-operative societies.

Meet the Best Gram Sevak

(Interviewed by M. K. Rao)



H. N. Mazumdar—the best Gram Sevak

MY QUESTION made him pensive, his eye-brows wrinkled. "You wanted to know what has brought me this glory?" He asked as if to catch my point. "To speak the truth I myself do not know. My achievements as a Gram Sevak are not as spectacular as most of you might be thinking".

Then he paused for a moment, and blurted out, "Yes I may tell you of one incident, which I consider the turning point in my march to glory. It was the middle of 1957. I was then new to the Garo Hills. A Seminar was being held at the District headquarters. The Deputy Commissioner of the Garo Hills was presiding over the function. As usual in such Seminars emphasis was being put on increased agricultural production. The D. C. asked us,—the field workers in the Hills,—to step up food production, and bring the Hill areas in line with those of the plains. A target was also fixed.

I could not understand this kind of general assessment of work without any reference to the local conditions. I mustered courage, stood up and sought permission to speak. The D. C. was kind enough to permit me. I said "Sir, to speak the truth, during the last five years we have done practically nothing in agriculture in the Hills. The conditions in the Hill areas are entirely different from those of the plains. Agriculture, here, is still in a primitive stage. The people do not know what is a plough and what is a hoe. They are practising shifting cultivation. There is no permanent village. After a year or two the location of the village shifts from one place to another. There is not a piece of level land with the villagers. Against such a background how can we ask the people to take to Japanese method of paddy cultivation, use manures and fertilizers in their fields? The first requirements of the area is the reclamation of level lands, terrace cultivation and contour bunding. Unless these steps are taken we cannot expect permanent villages, and without permanent villages it is useless to expect development activities and improved agricultural practices. I therefore suggest that plans for the Garo Hills area be altered suitably".

There was pin-drop silence in the gathering. The D.C. said that he had understood my point and asked me to prepare a plan and submit it to him the next morning. That was a memorable day in my life as a Gram Sevak.

"Then do you mean to say that the work thereafter was easier for you?" I asked. Shri Harinarayan Mazumdar disagreed and said, "No no, that's not the thing. The change in the plan, and the emphasis on things which were of immediate benefit to the local people facilitated my work".

"Which means that the people were ready to co-operate with you, but were not doing so previously because the schemes which you put across to them were impractical", I enquired. "That is correct to some extent. But one has to know the background of the remote interior of the Garo Hills to understand the conditions prevailing there and the difficulties of the Community development work. Garo Hills happens to be one of the most backward areas of Assam. The people are tribals. Years of exploitation by the people of the plains have made them timid and suspicious of us. As a result they shun the modern civilization. They live in the deep interior, surrounded by dense forests and inaccessible mountains. There were practically no roads when I went to Sangsakh, the Gram Sevak headquarters of Garo Hills Development Block, Resubelpara. One has to trek miles through the dense forests, infested by wild

dense forests, infested by wild animals and cris-crossed by swift flowing streams, to reach a village. It may take you days to reach a village, and even when you reach a village you can do nothing, unless the Nokma—the chieftain approves of your entry into the village and the Sardar has confidence in you", said Harinarayan.

"What was your approach?" I asked. "Well, it varied from area to area according to the local conditions. But mainly I tried to impress upon them, that if their kinsmen residing in the plains could lead a happy life, enjoy all the modern amenities why couldn't they? I used to tell them that they were more intelligent and more cultured than the plains-people. If their condition had not improved, it was more due to the Government and the people of the plains. The Government now has realized its past mistakes, and sincerely wants to help them, and that's why we have been sent there. This approach-part of the job is really very difficult. One has to have personal contacts, hold group and village level discussions over a pretty long period to achieve success'.

"By the way, Shri Mazumdar, what are the essential qualities a Gram Sevak should have to achieve success?" I interjected.

"Well, that is a difficult question. It varies from man to man, from Gram Sevak to Gram Sevak. But I feel that a Gram Sevak must be very sincere, painstaking, must have no complexes as to his rank and status, and above all should be very alert. He should try to be one with the villagers. Should be very cautious in giving advice, and his advice should be in the shape of suggestions. Should never give any promise which he can not fulfill, should be able to demonstrate himself the new method which he wants the villagers to adopt, and be able to understand the difficulties of the individual. As for me, for the first six months I stayed with the Garo people, led their life, tried to make them see what their difficulties were and suggested how they themselves could solve them. My first-aid box was an asset to me in making friendship with individual families. When I was posted to Sangsakh area the people did not know what a plough was. I brought a plough, a pair of baffaloes, and other implements from the Block headquarters, had an area cleared, ploughed it myself, and adopted the Japanese method of paddy cultivation. The villagers, all the while watched what I was doing. When the crops came the villagers saw the result and were impressed. Now it has become a problem for us to meet their demands".

"Then do you mean to say that all these hill people have taken to modern methods of agriculture?" I asked.

"No, I do not claim so much success. The shifting cultivation is still there. But many amongst them have taken to modern method of agriculture. They have reclaimed level lands near their villages, which means that they (the villages) have become more or less permanent. A loan of Rs. 400 per acre is being given to reclaim one acre of land. They have built kutcha approach roads to the villages. Villagers, particularly the school-going children now regularly clean their teeth and take bath, which is something unique. It is beter to assess the change in outlook than to go by physical targets achieved. To me, assessment through physical target achievements is misleading" said Harinarayan.

"What about village and cottage industries?" I asked.

"The Garo people are expert in wood, bamboo and cane works. What they need is latest designs of manufacture. You just show them the designs, they will prepare goods according to them in no time. They have also taken to bee-keeping and erie culture. The greatest problem is marketing the goods for want of roads. With the opening of roads, the goods will flow into the towns and the villagers would get enough work".

Monetary help to people, he feels, should be minimised, for very often it leads to complications. Medical facilities should be more widespread, as that facilitates contacts and helps in winning villagers' confidence. Of all the Block staff he feels the E.O. (Agriculture and Animal husbandry) and the Health Officer are most helpful to him. He felt that there should be more co-ordination between the various levels of the Block Staff. Rarely the Block staff works like a team.

SANTIPUR

P. BALASUBRAMANYAM
B.D.O., Karnool

Cast

VIJAY—*Village Sarpanch.*

SAHAKAR—*President, Co-operative society.*

UPADHYAY—*Village school master.*

SANDEH GAMBIR—*A respected influential kisan—a doubting Thomas.*

KARSHAK—*A young enthusiastic farmer, Gram Sahayak.*

SANGIK—*Social Education Organiser (Man).*

VINAY—*Gram Sevak.*

SUGUN—*Agricultural Extension Officer.*

(Santipur today is a model village with about 500 *families mostly agricultural. Drinking water well, reading room, adult literacy centre, rural bank, seed store, and other amenities have been created. Today it is a village for others to emulate. But conditions prevailing two years ago when the block had not yet been inaugurated were different.)*

Scene I

Under the greenwood tree at about 7 A.M. Kisans talk among themselves.

GAMBIR—Lo! the times have changed. Respect for elders is today a chapter in history. Even gratitude is becoming a rare commodity. Look at those chaps Karshak and Vijay. But for me they must have broken one another's head in the Panchayat elections. Today these kinds do not care to think of me. Along with that old Sahakar, they are puppets in the hands of the "Sirkari" mercenaries. What a pity! these chaps and that *bacha* of Gram Sevak come to preach agriculture to me! Well, you know I told them my experience is double their age. The times are changing. This is an age of amateurs. What can I do to arrest this movement?

KARSHAK—Gambirjee—Why this attack on a progressive movement? Everybody recognises your experience of men and affairs. But please remember things cannot stay where they were. Here comes the Gram Sevak.

VINAY—Namaste—I am really happy to inform you that "Rural Bank" will be organised in a couple of weeks here. The necessary share capital has been collected. Old Sahakarjee has really borne the brunt of this task. But my immediate task—Jananese method of paddy cultivation still remains a baffling problem. I have asked A.E.O. also to come here and help me in this. Let me try. Any way Gambirjee, if only you help me in the matter, there will be no difficulty.

GAMBIR—Oh! What can I do? Here people are all an ignorant mass of dumb-driven cattle! Any way your Gram Sahayakas-Karshak and Vijay are there. They are young. I am old. Look to them for assistance. (The Gram Sevak accompanied by some kisans goes to Bhajan mandal) What do these teenagers know about agriculture? Where is Japan and where is India? My experience in agriculture is double their age. Still they dare teach me plant husbandry! Oh—what a revolution! Could this ever have happend in British Raj. But in the name of freedom, everybody have become "Azaadi". The young have begun to teach the old. It is all our fate—Very bad times—these are only signs of the coming deluge.

Scene II

RAMNAGAR—*Office of the Block Development Officer.*

NIDHAN—I am happy to learn that your adult literacy centre is doing fine. The village is really changing its phase. But what about that Gambir. He refused to contribute for the Primary Health Centre. He dissuaded others from contributing Sramdan at the time of laying out the approach road. Now he is a real hurdle in the way of the Japanese method.

UPADHYAY—But it is a fact that

he is a big force in the village and carries weight. He belongs to the old school of thought and has not yet reconciled to the changed conditions. But believe me he is a man of high character. But for him there should have been several riots last year in connection with Panchayat elections.

B.D.O.—How is it we are not able to bring round such a desirable person?

SAHAKAR—True—he is a force in the village. Also he is good. But he is very obstinate. He cannot be moved easily. As Upadhyay wields special influence over him, I am sure he will get him round.

UPADHYAY—Sure—I will do my best. Also depute your S.E.O. Let a film be shown to the village folk on Japanese method.

B.D.O.—In fact I asked the A.E.O. and the S.E.O. to go to Santipur. One is a convincing talker. Another is a practical man.

UPADHYAY AND SAHAKAR thank you—good bye.

Scene III

Night 8 P.M. in the Bhajan Mandal

SANGIK—Very happy to be in your midst—Santipur is doing wonderfully well in all spheres. Pavements, drains, pedigree bulls, birds and pigs, primary health centre and what not? Truly there is advancement. But we must still go up, higher and higher. Our small men must become effective units of modern economy. A co-operative effort on the part of the State and citizens is the only solution. Today our agricultural production is low. We have to adopt better methods and produce more. I will show you shortly a film on Japanese method. Look and act likewise for our betterment and nation's prosperity.

SUGUN—Before the film, I will tell you a few things. Only this morning I conducted a demonstration of Japanese method in Karshak's holdings. You will please watch its performance and pass your judgment without bias. After all paddy is an ancient crop grown for ages in our country. Still our yields are the lowest compared to China, Japan, Italy etc.

GAMBIR—This is Bharat, Babu. Conditions are different. This is exactly where we find fault with bookish agricultural experts devoid of practical training.

SUGUN—No, No—not that way. Actually crop competitions have revealed that yields as high as 8,000 pounds per acre have been obtained in our country also. Use of pure and improved seed is the first requisite. Treatment of seed is the next feature. Economy in seed treatment is another factor. High manuring is another secret. Besides basal dressing of a farm yard manure or green leaf manure, apply 100 lbs. of superphosphate in puddle. About 80 lbs. of ammonium sulphate is also to be applied. This can be done with the help of a rope. Let the distance between two adjacent rows be 10″ and that between two plants be 6″ to 8″.

GAMBIR—What about extra labour?

SUGUN—Really—this will be a factor in the beginning. But as you gain experience, the problem will get solved. A month after transplanting, apply another dose of nitrogenous manure. Work the push hoe. The push hoe is advantageously worked twice again at intervals of 15 days. Heavy tillering and better grain set will be the result. Rank vegetative growth will be arrested. Again plant-protection is another item. Wherever there is a pest or disease, consult the nearest agricultural assistant.

GAMBIR—Okay—sir, But what about the expenditure?

SUGUN—About forty rupees extra may have to be spent. But the extra yield will be about 500 lbs. and that will be more than enough to compensate the extra expenditure.

KARSHAK—Why don't you uncle, try yourself this method in half an acre of your holding?

GAMBIR—That is what I am now thinking. I will try. If I find it really better, I assure you, I will be the champion of the Japanese method.

VINAY—Hurrah — another victory—Gambirji has moved. That means the entire village will move.

The film on Japanese Method is screened.

(Two years hence, the entire paddy crop is planted only according to the Japanese method).

MOBILE LIBRARIES

SHANKAR RAM

B.D.O., Ajitmal, Etawah.

THE MAIN objective of the programme of Community Development is to make us better citizens of India. To achieve this objective various economic programmes are being carried out by the people with the guidance of the Extension staff. This guidance is given to the people through the different media of education like films, exhibitions, demonstrations, seminars, libraries, training camps and study tours etc. Amongst these, the library is the most popular and effective. No one who has learnt to read and write and wishes to play his part fully in the life of the community as an intelligent and well-informed citizen can possibly do so without recourse to library.

Three types of libraries in the Community Development Blocks are at present functioning. They are :

1. Central library at the Block headquarters,
2. Small Libraries in the villages,
3. Circulating libraries.

Main functions of the Central Library are (i) to feed the circulating libraries and (ii) to provide reference books to the workers. Small rural libraries are coming from the pre-Block stage. The third type, *i.e.*, circulating libraries are very common in the Blocks and mainly served the purpose of providing follow up literature for the new literates.

Although these libraries are rendering useful service in widening the people's mental horizon, there is a great scope for improvement. The central library at the Block headquarters is open to the public but people from distant villages seldom come to borrow books from it.

The small libraries in the villages are also not serving the desired purpose. Either all the books have been once read by the people and have therefore no further use, or for want of voluntary librarians there are none to keep their records and to distribute them regularly. It is also not possible to have a paid man for each such library because it will involve a huge recurring expenditure. It is also not possible to have even part time paid staff for circulating libraries because of heavy expenditure.

We had, therefore, to evolve a system which may not have the above short-comings and at the same time be economical, regular, efficient and easily accessible. With this aim in view new mobile libraries in our Pilot Development Projects were started. Its objective : right book to the right reader, at the right time at his door.

One full-time librarian was engaged on a monthly remuneration of Rs. 48. Half of his pay *i.e.,* Rs 24 was paid from the Project budget and the other half from local contribution. He was provided with one cycle carrying a box containing 200 books on different subjects. He was required to work in twelve villages and to visit two villages

everyday. Thus he visits every village once a week on a fixed date. The premises for distribution of the books are also fixed. People know the time and date of his arrival and regularly assemble at the known centres for borrowing books. Periodically he replaces the old books so as to avoid slackness and to maintain the interest of the people with the new arrivals.

He carries a bell with him and rings the same when he reaches the village to announce his arrival. Special care has been given in selection of books suiting the taste of the rural people. Books on varied topics including Fiction, Religion, Agriculture, Public Health and Sarvodaya etc. have been supplied in large number. Books for new literates, women and children have also been provided. Their proportion has been kept as below :

1. Agriculture 20%
2. Co-operative, Public Health, Panchayat 10%
3. Fiction 20%
4. Sarvodaya 10%
5. Bhajan and folk songs .. 5%
6. Religious books 5%
7. Literature for new literate .. 10%
8. Literature for women and children 5%
9. Science, general knowledge .. 10%
10. Life of greatmen and literature on character building .. 5%

The books are supplied from the Block budget as in case of other libraries in the Block. Expenditure on its running works out to only Rs 4 per village. Out of that only Rs. 2 per village is incurred by the Government and the balance is met by the people. This is a very nominal amount, considering its utility to the community.

This system is at present working very satisfactorily in 37 villages of the Pilot Development Project. This can be judged from the following table showing number of books and persons who borrowed them in the month of September, October and November :—

TABLE SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS :

Name of village	*September*		*October*		*November*	
	No. of books borrowed	*No. of persons who borrowed*	*No. of books*	*No. of persons*	*No. of books*	*No. of persons*
Umari	53	32	88	33	79	28
Badhua	30	18	35	17	23	16
Khagipur	21	12	42	21	30	17
Sehud	34	30	26	16	45	23
Keshampur	42	23	81	30	69	23
Jaitpur	20	14	45	13	41	16
Jamuhan	24	19	39	15	33	18
Kakrahi	21	16	78	27	90	23
Kanchausi	51	32	55	28	83	42
Dohin	14	14	36	14	45	26
Lahokhar	22	12	18	10	16	9
Pegupur	25	46	36	43	46	39
Mohari	30	45	38	33	63	64
Kasba Baberpur ..	22	30	54	69	37	46
Khetupur	10	15	60	71	32	42
Bhekepur	30	35	30	35	61	29
Senganputha	10	15	30	27	41	36
Elchi Nagar ..	25	32	53	63	66	81
Tandwa Biku	20	25	64	78	43	46
Chitakapur	20	42	83	97	69	81
Sarai Imalia	25	36	38	38	22	20
Amavta	10	25	29	43	141	115
Shabajpur	26	33	21	33	33	30
Karwa Bujurg ..	119	82	62	37	41	26
Bijauli	79	49	68	39	36	21
Sarai Mithe	103	84	125	87	52	29
Serpur	99	69	96	62	100	58
Asadpur	81	46	84	52	64	37
Vyaspur	70	63	85	71	100	85
Ujhayani	53	42	72	54	75	50
Anepur	71	46	63	39	60	48
Aheripur	90	56	93	63	77	48
Danderpur	65	40	65	42	40	29
Mahewa	79	50	101	81	96	59
Bahera	92	56	68	46	84	54
Bamhaura	93	56	54	38	22	14
Purawali	68	42	82	53	16	9

It is evident from the table that there is a rising trend and the number of books distributed has increased in the successive months. On an average 36 persons per village are deriving benefit from this scheme. If we calculate the expenditure in distribution of the books it comes to less than an anna per month per head which is a very meagre amount. In view of its small recurring expenditure, efficient and sure working, service at the door and supply of books suiting one's choice, it is worth trying at other places. It is also based on self-help which is the keynote of Community Development programme.

PLANT PEST TURNS INTO MANURE

MORE THAN 17,000 tons of water hyacinth were converted into compost in Orissa for manurial purposes during 1957-58 and a target of 27,000 tons has been fixed for the year 1958-59. In Assam, Bihar, U.P. and West Bengal also, water hyacinth is widely used for compost making. The Government of U.P. has fixed a target of 33,000 tons of water hyacinth to be collected during 1958-59.

Water hyacinth is a perennial plant, originally grown for ornamental purposes. Tanks and depressions, deep in the rural interior of West Bengal, Orissa, Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, have received an idyllic charm from the lush growth of this plant. A persistent weed which multiplies rapidly by root stocks, water hyacinth quickly overruns vast expanses of water, blocks navigation along inland channels and creates other difficulties. But the difficulty has been solved by mobilising it for helping in increasing our agricultural production.

Water hyacinth can be utilised as a dry plant made into compost or after burning and reducing it to ash. As compost, it contains 1.5 per cent nitrogen which is higher than that of cow-dung. The ash of water hyacinth would be the most convenient form if it is to be transported; but by so doing all the nitrogen and organic matter contained in the plant are lost, although major part of the potash will be still left. The ash is slightly alkaline and if applied regularly, will ultimately have the effect of lime, salt and potash. It is, therefore, particularly valuable for the red soils which are acidic. Water hyacinth makes an excellent fertiliser for jute as this crop requires, besides nitrogen, potassic manures. On highlying lands, the rotted material would be preferable, while on heavy, low-lying, light, well-drained soils, the ash would probably be more successful.

Even under rotted conditions, when water hyacinth contains 65% of moisture, the nitrogen content is higher as compared to cow-dung. The same holds good in respect of its phosphoric acid, potash and organic matter contents. The only difficulties about water hyacinth are its non-availability in adequate quantities at appropriate time and places and the methods of composting. The latter difficulty can, however, be overcome by drying water hyacinth for three or four days after it has been removed from water, spreading the mass in six to eight inches thick layers and covering with half to one inch slurry of tank mud or cattle dung. The heap is thus plastered over with mud. After about three to four months the material decomposes and can be used as manure. Care should be taken to see that no green tissues of water hyacinth remains in the compost when applied to the land; otherwise, due to its rapid growth, it will cover the entire field with its own lush vegetation.

In U.P. the preparation of water hyacinth compost is at present being undertaken as a part of the programme of work under the local manurial resources scheme. A separate scheme for the production of water hyacinth compost has already been approved as a part of the special scheme for intensification of agricultural production in fifteen districts of the State. The main work under this scheme is the collection of water hyacinth which is estimated to cost about Rs. 8 per ton on the average. Ten tons of water hyacinth normally yield one ton of compost, the cost of compost per ton thus being Rs. 80 approximately. A subsidy of Rs. 8 per ton will be given to the interested parties who sell compost to the cultivators at the actual cost of production of the compost minus Rs. 8 per ton.

The Assam Government in their rural compost programme are encouraging their field staff to get compost pits filled up with water hyacinth where the same is handy, through farmers. In Bihar also this plant is being used along with other green matter for compost making West Bengal is the pioneer State in India for the successful investigation about the possibility of the use of water hyacinth for composting. This State is also a pioneer in embarking on a scheme for large scale production of compost manure under the Grow More Food Programme during 1950-1953.

TOO MANY REPORTS

THE NUMBER of records maintained by the Gram Sevak are at present too many. Some of them relate to the Halqa as a whole, others to each village and a substantial number to individual families. Apart from possible improvement in the schedules prescribed for these reports, there is much scope for rationalization of these records and reducing their number. It is suggested that family-wise records should be dispensed with as they are bound to take up a considerable part of the time of the VLWs without much additional advantage. Even with regard to village-wise reports, a consolidated register with different sections for activities and achievements under individual major heads of development together with a consolidated monthly achievement register will adequately serve the purpose. This will incidentally make available at a single place all relevant information relating to a village. A few other records will need to be maintained in addition, such as on stock position, agricultural demonstrations and daily diary, but the emphasis should be to see that the number of separate records are the minimum necessary. Another shortcoming at present is the absence of information of the source from which these data have been collected. The village records should invariably provide for this to facilitate checking of the information by the supervisory officers.

The VLW is at the moment entrusted with also the work of agricultural statistics (required to be done by the Karamchari). This is obviously an additional burden and is bound to affect his legitimate functions. He should be spared of this extra work in the interest of both the extension programme and the maintenance of statistics relating to it.

The Junior Statistics Supervisor although exclusively meant for the compilation of block level statistics and for ensuring their reliability by spot inspection, has not proved effective so far in these activities. The chief handicap seems to be that his training was inadequate for this purpose. Often the J.S.S. was posted in a Block after a hurried training of a fortnight. It is absolutely necessary to recall all such supervisors to the State headquarters once again for a refresher course of training which should put more emphasis on the various aspects of the development programme and the procedures for collection of information rather than abstract statistical methods. It is also necessary that a definite time schedule of inspection is prescribed for J.S.S. with detailed instructions on the items to be checked and the manner of checking. In addition to the J.S.S., the extension supervisors as well as the B.D.O. should be made responsible for direct spot checking of a certain percentage of the entries in the progress reports. While the Extension Supervisors should be entrusted with this responsibility for cent per cent checking of the items covered under their sectors, the BDO may be required to inspect at least all important items under agriculture and allied sectors as these are the most important and also the difficult items.

The services of the District Statistical Officer should be more effectively utilised for inspection of the block level statistics which does not seem to be the case at present. It should be possible for the District Statistical Officer and the Distt. Development Officer to make a thorough checking of at least the block level quarterly progress by visiting between them each and every block headquarters in the district. It is also necessary to make a statistical evaluation of the relative performance of the Blocks within the district at the end of each quarter with the help of key indicators. *(Based on a Tour Report of Director of Administrative Intelligence, Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation.)*

OUR HERITAGE

(*Continued from cover page 2*) crops got the major share of the fertilizer. Grain crops had a smaller share.

HARMFUL EFFECTS

It is said that cultivators are prejudiced against the use fertilizers which are said to have corrosive effect on the crops. In our inquiry it was found that 73 per cent cultivators expressed the view that the fertilizer had no corrosive effect on the crops. About 20 per cent of the cultivators said that the fertilizer had a bad effect on the soil *i.e.*, the soil became hard after the application of the fertilizer. But 75 per cent of the cultivators could not see any such bad effect on the soil. The cultivators were asked to state as to which soil the fertilizer should be profitably applied. Half of the cultivators said that the fertilizer should be applied where assured supply of water to irrigate the crops was available. Sixty three per cent of the cultivators said that the fertilizer can be profitably applied to medium soils, thirty one per cent said that it should be applied to heavy soils and about a quarter of them said that it should be applied to light soils. Three quarters of the cultivators said that the fertilizer should not be applied, if rainfall is less than normal. The season had no relation to the consumption of the fertilizer. An unfavourable season did not decrease the consumption of fertilizer in the following year. The market rates of cotton and jowar did come down considerably during 1954-55 and 1955-56—lower than the rates of commodities prevailing during 1953-54. But this reduction in the rates of commodities did not in any way affect the consumption of fertilizers.

Two extension methods were mostly used, namely fertilizer demonstrations and information from neighbour to neighbour. The ferlilizer trials were conducted on the cultivators' fields. The fertilizers were supplied free of cost to the cultivators for these trials. These fertilizer demonstrations have proved useful.

Passing on of "information" from neighbour to neighbour is an important consideration in extension teaching. This method was found to have greater effectiveness than any other method in both the blocks, where the majority of cultivators are illiterate. Nearly half of the cultivators whose cases were studied recommended others to use the fertilizer. I would suggest that an illustrated pamphlet or a bulletin be given free of cost to a farmer, when he purchases the fertilizer.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS

THE GOVERNMENT of India, have recently introduced a new form of Post Office Savings deposit scheme to help people of moderate income. The scheme provides an opportunity to small savers to save for specific objectives such as marriage, higher education and house building. It will be operated by post offices having savings banks. There are two types of accounts under the scheme—Five-year and ten-year. Besides persons individually opening accounts, the scheme provides for any two persons to jointly open an account. A guardian can open an account on behalf of a minor or a lunatic.

Under the new scheme, a person may deposit up to a maximum of Rs. 100 a month in a 10-year account, or Rs. 200 per month in a five-year account provided the total of the deposits made during the entire period of his account (or accounts where he had more than one account) should not exceed Rs. 12,000. The monthly deposits can be made in sums of Rs. 5, Rs. 10, Rs. 20, Rs. 50, Rs. 100 or Rs. 200. In case of defaults, the date of maturity of the account is extended by the number of months for which defaults have occurred. The accounts are, however, treated as 'discontinued' if the period of defaults exceeds five months in the case of a five-year account and ten months in the case of a ten-year account On discontinued accounts, proportionate amounts will be paid on the expiry of the period for which the accounts stand.

Withdrawals from the accounts are allowed once during the currency of a five-year account and twice in the case of a 10-year account. The amount of withdrawal should not exceed 50 per cent of the total amount of deposits made and the account must have been in operation for more than a year. The amount withdrawn will be deducted from the amount payable under the account, with simple interest at 6 per cent per year.

The interest on these deposits at maturity works out to 3.264 per cent on a five-year account and at 3.795 per cent on a 10-year account. The interest is free of income-tax. The legal heirs of the survivors can continue the account to maturity.

Manipuri women coming to the market with baskets full of pottery. A Manipur village market is one of the most picturesque sights to be seen anywhere. It is usually held in an open *maidan* with merchants, mostly women, sitting in neat little rows with their merchandise, which includes everything that their soil can produce and their hands can make; the most coveted articles being fish and salt and red and yellow handloom shawls. It is not only the market in Manipur which is dominated by women, they also run the handloom industry and most of the State's cottage crafts. It is to this fact, partly, that the Manipur handicrafts own their characteristic colourfulness and charm.

Printed by the Manager Government of India Press, Faridabad and published by the Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi—8, on behalf of the Ministry of Community Development.

Regd.—877